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GUILTY ON ALL COUNTS: DONALD TRUMP NOW A CONVICTED FELON

A jury found the ex-US president guilty on each of the 34 counts of falsifying records to hide a payment to silence porn star Stormy Daniels

FIRST EX-PREZ TO BE CONVICTED OF A CRIME

According to the grand jury, Donald Trump paid $130,000 to the adult film star to prevent her from publicising an alleged sexual encounter with him that could have been fatal to his 2016 presidential campaign. Trump, 77, is the first ex-US president to be convicted of any crime. This, however, does not bar the Republican presumptive nominee from running for president | P12

$35-MILLION FUND BOOST TO DON'S CAMPAIGN

- Trump can become president if he wins the election, even if he is sent to jail. In theory, he can get four years in jail but is more likely to get probation
- The former president has indicated he will appeal verdict. "This was a rigged trial by a conflicted judge who was corrupt," he said. His campaign team said support for him is intact, adding $35 million was raised soon after the verdict

July 11, 2024

WHEN JUDGE JUAN MERCHAN WILL DECIDE WHETHER TO SEND TRUMP TO JAIL OR NOT

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Heatstroke: 25 poll officials among 74 dead

Roadside vendors rest in the shade beneath a stationary train coach on a hot summer day in Mumbai | AP

RAMASHANKAR AND ASISH MEHTA @ Patna/ Bhubaneswar

AT least 74 people, including 25 polling personnel in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, succumbed to heatstroke in the last 48 hours. The maximum casualty was in Odisha, where the suspected heatstroke toll stood at 36. UP followed with 20, Bihar 14, and Jharkhand four.

In UP, 15 poll personnel (13 in Mirzapur district and two in Sonbhadra district) died following high fever and high blood pressure amid heatwave conditions.

As for Bihar, most of the deaths were reported from Bhojpur where five polling personnel succumbed to heatstroke. Three other polling officials died in Rohtas, while Kaimur and Aurangabad districts reported one such death each.

In Odisha, sunstroke fatalities were reported in Rourkela city, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur and Balangir districts. In Jharsuguda, most of the victims were drivers by profession. In Jharkhand, over 1,300 people were admitted to hospitals due to heat-related issues. Heat wave conditions are expected to persist during the last phase of polling on Saturday.

The temperature sensor at Nagpur registered a maximum of 56°C on Thursday, but it was attributed to a sensor error a day later. P9

Milke piyo, Milke jiyo!

GDP beats estimates, logs 8.2% expansion in 2023-24

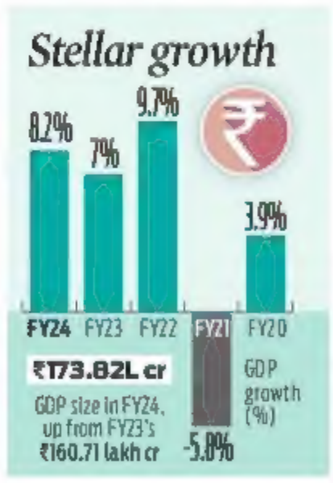
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

INDIA's real GDP grew at a fabulous 8.2% in FY24 against 7% in FY23. This is 60 bps higher than the second advance estimates, which pegged growth at 7.6%. This is also the third successive year of 7%-plus growth. It beats both RBI's forecast of 7% and consensus estimates of 7.6-7.8%, and retains India's position as the world's fastest growing major economy for the third year in a row. However, Q4 growth slowed marginally to 7.8%, lower than the 8%-plus growth registered in each of the previous three quarters of FY24.

According to provisional estimates released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on Friday, real GDP, in absolute numbers, stood at ₹173.82 lakh crore in FY24 against ₹160.71 lakh crore a year before, while gross value added was ₹295.36 lakh crore. Likewise, Q4 real GDP stood at ₹47.24 lakh crore against ₹43.84 lakh crore a year ago.

On the expenditure side, FY24's growth was driven by domestic investments, which grew by 8.9%, while private consumption and government consumption remained subdued. Sources said private consumption will likely fare better given that it recorded a decent growth of 9.4% between FY21 and FY23, notwithstanding the post-pandemic affects on spending. On the supply side, the agriculture sector saw a heart-sinking 1.4% growth; services sector growth too was less than desired at 7.6%. Industries sector turned in a relatively better performance of 9.7% growth in FY24.

Manufacturing saw 9.9% growth against a 2.2% contraction in FY23. Mining sector grew 7.1% in FY24 compared to 1.9% a year ago.



Popularity test for VIPs in final phase of polls

Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking third consecutive term; five ministers in the fray

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

A clutch of VIPs will face their popularity test in the last of seven phases of the general elections on Saturday. At stake is the reputation of big hitters such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his five cabinet colleagues and Opposition leaders like the Trinamool Congress's Abhishek Banerjee. While Modi is meditating at the Vivekananda Rock memorial in Kanniyakumari, his party leaders are managing the Varanasi joust.

In all, 57 Lok Sabha seats spread across seven states — Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Punjab — and the Union territory of Chandigarh will go to polls. Modi is seeking his third consecutive re-election from Varanasi. His cabinet colleague Anurag Thakur is seeking re-election from Hamirpur. He is pitted against Congress' Anand Sharma.

Other prominent BJP leaders in the fray are Anupriya Patel, R K Singh, Mahendra Nath Pandey, Pankaj Chaudhary, Lalu Prasad Yadav's daughter Misa Bharti, and Congress' Manish Tewari. The prestige of actor Kangana Ranaut and Himachal minister Vikramaditya Singh Singh is at stake in Mandi.

Taranjit Singh Sandhu, former envoy to the US, is pitted against Akali Dal's Anil Joshi in Amritsar. Union minister R K Singh is aiming at a hat-trick from Arrah, where his challenger is Sudama Prasad, a sitting MLA of the CPI(ML) Liberation.

In Varanasi, those contesting against Modi are Ajay Rai (Congress), Ather Jamal Lari (BSP), Kolisetty Shiva Kumar (Yuga Thulasi Party), Gagan Prakash Yadav, (Apna Dal, Kameravadi), and independents Dinesh Kumar Yadav and Sanjay Kumar Tiwari.

In Patna Sahib, BJP veteran Ravi Shankar Prasad is eyeing a second consecutive term.

In Bengal, the seventh phase will cover Dum Dum, Barasat, Basirhat, Jayanagar, Mathurapur, Diamond Harbour, Jadavpur, Kolkata Dakshin, and Kolkata Uttar, where the Trinamool secured victories in 2019.

Late Mukhtar Ansari's brother Afzal Ansari is in the fray from Ghazipur. P10

DECIDE
PHASE 7 FACTS

57 Parliamentary constituencies (General 41; SC 8; ST 8) in 8 States/UTs go to polls

42 Assembly constituencies (General 27; SC 6; ST 9) of Odisha assembly, too, will have simultaneous polling

10.9 lakh polling officials deployed

Over 10.06 cr electors to cast their votes - 5.24 cr male; 4.82 cr female and 3,574 third gender

SEX SCANDAL

PRAJWAL SENT TO POLICE CUSTODY TILL JUNE 6

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

HASSAN MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing sexual abuse cases, was on Friday remanded in police custody till June 6 in a case registered against him at the Holenarasipur Town police station.

The 33-year-old MP, who was absconding for 34 days, was taken into custody by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) as soon as he landed at the Kempegowda International Airport.

Escorted by women police officers, Prajwal was taken to the SIT office on the CID premises in the city. He was subjected to medical tests in the afternoon before he was produced at the 42nd Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Court.

The prosecution appealed to the court to grant his custody for 15 days, while advocates representing Prajwal argued that he had surrendered and was cooperating with the SIT.

Hence, there was no need to remand him in police custody for 15 days.

CONTINUED ON: P4

SIT officers accompany Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna to Bowring Hospital for a medical examination in Bengaluru on Friday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

NO ANTICIPATORY BAIL TO BHAVANI, SAYS COURT

The special court on Friday rejected the anticipatory bail plea filed by Bhavani Revanna, mother of rape accused MP Prajwal Revanna. Bhavani too is an accused in the kidnap case registered by the son of a victim of sexual assault. P4

SIT sleuths to probe Valmiki ST Corpn row

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

UNDER pressure from BJP, the state government on Friday constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the alleged misappropriation of funds in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd.

Under Additional Director General of Police (CID) Manish Kharbikar, the SIT will have three senior police officers. It will probe the allegations in corporation official Chandrashekar's suicide note and a complaint filed by his wife. It will also probe the corporation's complaint against some officials of the Union Bank of India. The bank has filed a complaint with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to probe the cash transactions in question. P5

EXPRESS READ

Record set: VTU declares final sem results within 3 hrs of exams

Belagavi: Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) created a record by declaring results of final semester B.E/BTech/B.Arch/B.Plan courses within three hours of exams on Thursday. The exams ended at 5 pm and the results of 42,323 students were out before 8.30 pm. P3

DGCA issues show-cause notice to Air India for flight delays

New Delhi: Civil aviation watchdog Directorate General of Civil Avitaion (DGCA) on Friday issued a show-cause notice to Air India for inordinate delay of at least two international flights and failure to take due care of passengers.

Abhineta queers Neta's pitch in Bihar's Karakat

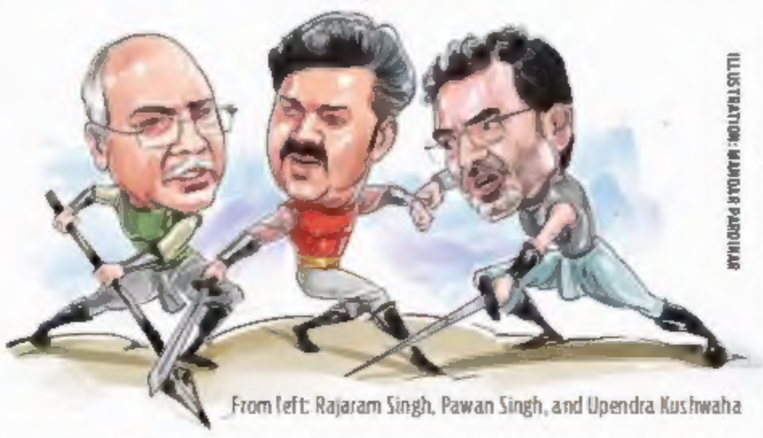
RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

WHEN the going gets tough, the tough gets going." This old saying holds true for former Union minister and Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM) chief Upendra Kushwaha, the NDA candidate in Bihar's Karakat Lok Sabha constituency. The seat is witnessing a close triangular fight after Bhojpuri actor-cum-singer Pawan Singh entered the fray as an Independent.

SHOWTIME FOR GLADIATORS

Pawan was earlier with the BJP and positioned himself as a rebel candidate against the NDA pick Upendra. He was expelled from the BJP sacked after he ignored the party's order to stand down. He belongs to the dominant Rajput upper caste, the traditional vote bank of the NDA with an estimated strength of around 1.5 lakh.

Before the popular star's entry, Upendra was pitted against CPI-ML's Rajaram Singh. But the dramatic entry of Pawan, who has a huge fan following, alarmed NDA leaders. "The former had an edge considering the caste equation in the constituency," says Dinesh Kushwaha, a resident of Dehri-on-Sone. Sensing trouble, the NDA brass called in Rajput leaders including Union defence minister Rajnath Singh, former MP and NDA candidate from Sheohar Lovely Anand, and MLC Sanjay Singh to campaign for Upendra, who had won Karakat in 2014.



From left: Rajaram Singh, Pawan Singh, and Upendra Kushwaha

ILLUSTRATION: MANDAR PARDIKAR

The sitting MP is JD(U)'s Mahabali Singh, who had defeated Upendra in 2019 when the latter was contesting on a Rashtriya Lok Samta Party ticket. This time, Mahabali vacated the seat under NDA's seat-sharing pact.

Caste is a major factor in this election as voters consider the victory of a candidate from their community a prestige issue. There are 2.40 lakh Kushwahas in the constituency followed by Yadavs (3.5 lakh), Brahmins (1 lakh), Bhumihars (80,000), Paswan (30,000) and Ravidas (1.5 lakh).

While Upendra is mainly banking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity and development works, Rajaram is relying on the Muslim-Yadav combination of RJD besides CPI-ML cadre votes. "We have a strong support base in the constituency," claimed Subhankar Rai, a CPI-ML supporter.

On his part, Pawan promises to generate employment, promote organic farming, develop film industry, re-open closed factories, and establish IT park if elected. He has made the contest pretty colourful by roping in a host of Bhojpuri actors and singers, including Khesarari Lal Yadav, Pakhi Hedge, Manoj Tiger, Sona Singh, Shilpi Raj, Astha Singh, Aayaz Khan and Shivani Singh. It needs to be seen if the crowds will turn into votes.

(This is the concluding piece of the series that began on April 10, capturing the ground situation and giving readers a sense of the pulse of the nation.)